

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

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2009

Committee on Petitions

2008/2169(INI)

20.1.2009

OPINION

of the Committee on Petitions

for the Committee on Constitutional Affairs

with recommendations to the Commission on guidelines for a proposal for a regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the implementation of the Citizen's Initiative
(2008/2169(INI))

Rapporteur: Carlos Carnero González

(Initiative – Rule 39 of the Rules of Procedure)

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SUGGESTIONS

The Committee on Petitions calls on the Committee on Constitutional Affairs, as the committee responsible, to incorporate the following suggestions in its motion for a resolution:

- A. whereas it is important to have regard to the provisions contained in the Lisbon Treaty relating to the Citizens' Initiative, which are designed to enable European citizens to play a more significant direct role in influencing European legislative acts which are required for the purpose of implementing the Treaties,
- B. whereas the right to petition has existed since the Treaty of Maastricht, and whereas Parliament has developed a series of procedures designed to respond to this important right of all EU citizens and residents, notably as regards matters bearing on the application of EU law by national and local authorities and the impact of such law on individuals and their local communities,
 - 1. Calls for the regulation on the implementation of the Citizens' Initiative, laying down the conditions for the exercise of the right in that regard, to be clear, simple and user-friendly, incorporating practical elements related to the definition of a Citizens Initiative in order that it should not be confused with the right of petition;
 - 2. Expresses its concern that, according to the proposals currently circulated by those supporting the Citizens' Initiative, many practical examples shown are in fact current campaign-type petitions, some of which are already registered in Parliament as petitions, without bearing any specific relation to the Citizens' Initiative as defined in the Treaty;
 - 3. Consequently, draws attention to the need to ensure that citizens are fully aware of this distinction, given that the right to petition is directed towards the European Parliament and the Citizens' Initiative to the Commission;
 - 4. Notes in addition that Parliament, exercising its own right of legislative initiative, may decide to launch this procedure and to act upon recommendations based on petitions received by its competent committee;
 - 5. Calls for its Committee on Petitions to be given responsibility to monitor the implementation of the regulation on the Citizens' Initiative by ensuring that proposals made by citizens are considered at meetings of the Committee on Petitions to which other related committees with a sectoral responsibility for the policy area concerned are invited and at which the Commission should be called upon to give an opinion;
 - 6. Believes that such measures may better ensure compatibility between proposals addressed to the Commission in the first instance by citizens and the European Parliament's democratically approved priorities and proposals;
 - 7. Considers that Parliament should be able to pronounce on the suitability of a Citizens' Initiative, associated with any suggestions and recommendations made, before the Commission proceeds with the detailed elaboration of a legislative text based on the Citizens' Initiative;

8. Recognises that questions of eligibility need to be addressed, and in that context considers that flexibility should be shown with regard to what precisely constitutes the “several Member States” from which the one million-plus signatures should be drawn; similarly, in line with the practice used for petitions, considers that the possibility of supporting a Citizens' Initiative should be open to all EU citizens.

RESULT OF FINAL VOTE IN COMMITTEE

Date adopted	19.1.2009
Result of final vote	+: 21 -: 0 0: 0
Members present for the final vote	Sir Robert Atkins, Margrete Auken, Inés Ayala Sender, Victor Boştinaru, Simon Busuttil, Alexandra Dobolyi, Glyn Ford, Cristina Gutiérrez-Cortines, David Hammerstein, Marian Harkin, Carlos José Iturgaiz Angulo, Marcin Libicki, Miguel Angel Martínez Martínez, Manolis Mavrommatis, Mairead McGuinness, Marie Panayotopoulos-Cassiotou, Nicolae Vlad Popa, Kathy Sinnott
Substitute(s) present for the final vote	Carlos Carnero González, Marie-Hélène Descamps, Henrik Lax